

# METHOD, APPARATUS AND SYSTEM FOR HOSTING INFORMATION EXCHANGE GROUPS ON A WIDE AREA NETWORK

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An method and system for hosting information exchange groups on a wide area  
5 network is disclosed, using various tools for promoting topical organization and self-  
evolution of the information exchange groups, and of a system of information exchange  
groups. These tools include methods for providing user rating of posts within the  
exchange group, for rating and ranking users of the exchange group, for rating and  
ranking links to related information pages and especially to related exchange groups  
10 operating according to the methods of the invention, and for continuously updating  
rating and ranking information. Additionally, methods are provided for users to found  
exchange groups, to filter information in exchange groups according to specified user  
preferences, and to protect private information from inadvertent disclosure to other  
users of the exchange group.

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